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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*** Consumer Advisory ***

Terry Goddard Warns Consumers About Monsoon Repair Scams

(Phoenix, Ariz. – July 27, 2005) Attorney General Terry Goddard is warning Arizonans to be wary of unsolicited contractors coming to your door and offering help with repairs or clean-up related to monsoon storms.

"This is a seasonal event," Goddard said. "The summer monsoons are soon followed by scam artists who try to take advantage of homeowners coping with damage to their homes and property."

Some unsolicited contractors will claim to have extra materials because they are doing working in the neighborhood. The pitch to the homeowner includes a "discounted" price for materials so the contractor won't have to throw materials away. Typically, the homeowner is given a verbal quote, but never a written estimate for the job. The unsolicited contractor will do the work, and in some cases without the homeowner's consent will do additional work.

After the job is complete, the person gives the homeowner a final bill that is thousands of dollars more than what was originally quoted. The person demands immediate payment and in some cases refuse to leave, making the homeowner feel pressured into paying in full.

Goddard cautions Arizona residents to think twice before allowing a repair person who shows up after a monsoon to work on your home. Instead, Goddard offers the following tips when choosing a contractor:

- **Shop around.** Ask for written estimates from at least three contractors.
- Request a list of references and check them before agreeing to hire anyone.
- Check with the Arizona Registrar of Contractors [www.azroc.gov] to make sure the contractor you are considering has a license.
- Make sure the scope of the project, the price and any other relevant terms are spelled out in a written contract.
- Never allow yourself to be hurried into making a decision. No reputable contractor will try to pressure you into hiring them.

If residents are approached by people who appear to be repair scam artists, please report them to the Attorney General's Office by visiting the Web site at www.azag.gov and submitting an online "Consumer Complaint" or calling the Office at 602.542.5763 in Phoenix; 520.628.6504 in Tucson; or 1.800.352.8431 outside the Phoenix and Tucson metro areas.

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